

News Release
U.S. Department of Justice
United States Attorney
District of Rhode Island

January 12, 2006

Two are charged in pipe bomb incident

A federal grand jury has charged **Bobby Soundara**, 20 and **Vanhhatdy Souvaunaxab**, 19, both of Providence, with federal explosives violations in connection with a pipe bomb explosion at a Cranston house in September. A woman was injured in the explosion. A joint federal – state investigation determined that the bombing was related to rivalries among street gangs.

United States Attorney Robert Clark Corrente, William Hoover, Special Agent in Charge of the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives, and Colonel Stephen McGrath, Cranston Police Chief, jointly announced a two-count indictment, which the grand jury returned yesterday in U.S. District Court, Providence.

Acting on a complaint, agents arrested Soundara in November following a joint investigation by Cranston Police and ATF. Agents arrested Souvaunaxab yesterday after the indictment was returned. Both defendants are detained at the Wyatt Federal Detention Center, Central Falls.

At Souvanaxab's arraignment today, Assistant U.S. Attorney Gerard B. Sullivan said that on September 11 at a house on Harry Street, Cranston, there was an explosion in which a resident lost an eye and suffered other injuries. Investigators found traces of a pipe bomb in the house. The injured woman's son, who also lives there, has been identified as a member of the Young Bloods street gang.

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The investigation led agents to Soundara and Souvanaxab, who have been identified as members of a rival gang, Laos Pride. According to gang investigators, the Young Bloods adhere to the tradition of so-called “Blood” gangs, which generally identify with the color red, while Laos Pride follow the “Crips” gang tradition that is generally identified with the color blue. Assistant U.S. Attorney Sullivan said detectives found a blue bandana at the scene of the September 11 bombing.

The indictment charges Soundara and Souvaunaxab with illegally possessing a pipe bomb and with maliciously causing an explosion that resulted in injury. Upon conviction, the first charge has a maximum penalty of ten years in prison and a \$10,000 fine. The second carries a penalty of seven to 40 years in prison and a \$250,000 fine. An indictment is merely an allegation and a defendant is presumed innocent unless and until proven guilty.

ATF, Cranston Police, Providence Police, the Federal Bureau of Investigation, and the Rhode Island State Fire Marshal investigated the pipe bombing. Assistant U.S. Attorney Gerard B. Sullivan is prosecuting the case.

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